

# UN Human Rights Council 47: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Health

World news story

The UK delivered this statement during the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on health.



The Human Rights Council takes place in Geneva.

Thank you, Madam President.

The United Kingdom would like to thank the Special Rapporteur for her report on this important agenda and in particular her focus on ensuring the enjoyment of sexual and reproductive health and rights for all.

The UK remains strongly committed to defending and championing comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights globally. We will continue to use our voice on the world stage and work with others to defend and promote these fundamental rights for all. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated inequalities and has put the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women, girls, adolescents and other marginalised groups at real risk. The UK therefore welcomes the Special Rapporteur's plans to build on her predecessors' report on the right to highest attainable standard of physical and mental health of adolescents.

COVID-19 related school closures have put many adolescent girls at risk as schools provide an important entry point for education and raising awareness of sexual and reproductive health and rights. The UK is committed to dismantling barriers to girls' education by addressing discriminatory gender norms, keeping girls safe from violence and providing life skills including sex and relationships education.

Special Rapporteur,

How can Member States best support your work on the sexual and reproductive health and rights of adolescents?

Thank you.

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## [Northern Ireland Office confirms supplier to offer Centenary tree to every local school](#)

- A Northern Ireland native tree available for every school in Northern Ireland as part of the Centenary year.
- Portadown's Craigmores Trees confirmed as supplier to deliver the Trees for Schools scheme.
- Secretary of State Brandon Lewis says the initiative will leave a 'positive environmental legacy' for Northern Ireland.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis has today announced the supplier for the Centenary 'Trees for Schools' initiative led by the Northern Ireland Office, which will see over 1,100 schools in Northern Ireland offered a native tree for planting to mark the Centenary year.

The local Northern Ireland supplier will be Portadown company Craigmores Trees, who will offer schools a range of native trees to choose from including alder, birch, crab apple, ornamental cherry, rowan and oak.

Each tree will be accompanied by a special plaque, and will grow and mature in the years to come, acting as a reminder for future generations of this significant year for the people of Northern Ireland and the whole UK.

The awarding of the contract comes not only in Northern Ireland's Centenary year but also in the year in which the UK Government will host COP 26 in Glasgow. This November, COP 26 will see the UK host the UN climate change conference, where world leaders will meet with the aim to agree how to tackle the urgent threat of global climate change.

Welcoming today's announcement, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis said:

"Our Trees for Schools initiative fulfills our promise of building back greener across the United Kingdom and, in addition to marking the Centenary, leaves a positive environmental legacy for the people of Northern Ireland.

"This great opportunity is open to every school in Northern Ireland, and over

one thousand trees will be offered to mark this significant year for Northern Ireland and the whole of the UK.

“I would like to thank Craigmores Trees for delivering this important project for the benefit of Northern Ireland’s schoolchildren and generations to come.”

Owner of Craigmores Trees Mark Wilson, whose Co Armagh tree nursery has been in business for over 20 years, said:

“I am proud that Craigmores Trees has been chosen to supply Centenary trees for Northern Ireland schools.

“Initiatives like this help to teach children how to care for plants and the environment, benefitting the planet and sowing positive seeds for the future.”

Principal of Bangor Central Integrated Primary School Peter Campbell said:

“I think that the NIO’s Trees for Schools initiative is a fantastic way to mark the Centenary year and a practical way to teach our children how to look after the environment.

“Our school will be requesting a Centenary tree as soon as possible, and I look forward to planting it with our pupils later this year.”

The Centenary trees will be delivered to all schools who choose to apply. Delivery will take place between October and December. A brochure is being sent out to schools, with those who wish to take part asked to email their contact details and choice of tree to [treesforschools@nio.gov.uk](mailto:treesforschools@nio.gov.uk) by Friday 1 October.

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## **British-built satellites will help fight climate change and save wildlife**

Monitoring and tackling climate change and tracking endangered wildlife are among the exciting features of three UK-built satellites set to launch on a SpaceX rocket on Friday 25 June.

UK companies have received nearly £15 million from the UK Space Agency, through the European Space Agency’s Pioneer Partnership Programme, to develop the trio of satellites due to lift off from NASA’s Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Lacuna Space, based at the Harwell Space Cluster in Oxfordshire, is revolutionising the cost and simplicity of connecting sensors to the internet, reaching every corner on Earth using small satellites to support

the Internet of Things.

Lacuna sensors, which fit in the palm of your hand and run for years off a single battery charge, can be used to monitor the environment, track wildlife and help farmers by providing data on the health of cattle and crops and for water and soil management.

The satellites will launch aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket. Credit: SpaceX

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

As we get ready to host the UN Climate Change Conference, COP26, in Glasgow later this year, the UK is leading the way in exploiting space to tackle climate change, developing satellites that enable our world class scientists to monitor the environment in remarkable detail.

As well as supporting our climate ambitions, these British-built satellites will provide exciting innovation in remote sensing and tracking, kickstarting industry to offer new services that will help to improve all our lives.

Two of the satellites, built by Spire, in Glasgow, will develop optical intersatellite links (ISL) which will provide a step change in how we get large amounts of data from space down to Earth. This will enable constellations of satellites to become integrated networks in space, capable of delivering very high volumes of data at speed to anywhere in the world, including remote and rural areas, disaster areas and at sea.

This enhanced data and better predictive analytics will improve our understanding of the environment and the impact we have on it.

Spire has been supported by the UK Space Agency, through the European Space Agency's Pioneer Partnership Programme with nearly £9 million of total funding, to develop a range of innovative technologies and data platforms including the pair of satellites planned for tomorrow's launch.

Elodie Viau, Director of Telecommunications and Integrated Applications at ESA, said:

ESA is proud to enable small and medium-sized enterprises in Europe to become space mission providers and enter the space industry through programmes such as Pioneer. It provides innovators and entrepreneurs with the means to access space through cost-effective processes, creating jobs and boosting prosperity, and supporting the success of the European and Canadian space industry in the highly competitive global telecommunications market.

Theresa Condor, Executive Vice President and General Manager of Spire Space Services, said:

At a critical time for our planet, and with COP26 taking place later this year, we need to be able to map out and report on rapidly changing phenomena on Earth. That is the core purpose of Spire's constellation. Enhanced data and better predictive analytics help us to further understand our environment and the impact we have on it.

Optical ISL allows us to deliver the most time sensitive data faster and at higher volumes for critical applications such as weather monitoring and forecasting.

The third satellite is built by In-Space Missions, based in Hampshire, supported by £4.9 million of funding for this and future validation missions expected to launch in 2022/2023. The Faraday Phoenix satellite incorporates payloads for six customers including Airbus, Lacuna, SatixFy and Aeternum.

Lacuna sensors have been used to monitor king penguins. Credit: Lacuna Space

Doug Liddle, CEO at In-Space Missions, said:

The team here at In-Space is incredibly proud to be launching our highly capable and innovative satellite which has come together in less than a year. We're particularly excited to be flying on a Falcon 9 from Cape Canaveral – a location with such an amazing history.

The In-Space satellite includes the demonstration payload for Lacuna Space, which is developing a ground-breaking satellite IoT service, thanks to £800,000 in funding. This is the next step in Lacuna's space network, further improving the company's capability to service massive deployments for the IoT.

Rob Spurrett, Lacuna's CEO, said:

Much like the early days of the internet, when it was hard to imagine the impact of having everybody connected, it seems there is an endless world of possibilities from now connecting physical objects or "things". In cities there are many possible ways to do that, but our service ensures that rural parts of the UK and even the most remote locations in the world are part of this data revolution.

The SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket is due to launch from NASA's Kennedy Space Center

in Florida. The four-hour launch window opens at 8pm BST on Friday 25 June.

### **Taxi ride to space – other payloads on the Faraday Phoenix mission:**

The mission will fly In-Space's own Babel payload as the first incarnation of a future digital, uploadable payload offering within the Faraday service. This first version is a high gain, wideband software defined radio with enabling a number of different applications to be uploaded and exercised – from tracking ship radars to creating heat maps of 4G mobile usage.

SatixFy Space Systems, based in Manchester, is using the mission to demonstrate their satcom technology in space for the first time. SatixFy's cubesat computer will be the most capable product of its type on the market, supporting up to 4Gbps of data transmission, and allowing companies to process large amounts of data in orbit. The Airbus Prometheus 1 payload, built in Portsmouth, with a Software Defined Radio will be able to survey radio spectrum usage across the world from orbit, detect radar tracking of the Faraday Phoenix satellite, and potentially identify and locate search and rescue beacons.

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## **Mushroom supplier to pay charity** **£54,880.33 for ignoring packaging** **regulations**

- Environment Agency estimates company handled nearly 9,000 tonnes of packaging
- Payment will help create new education materials for the charity
- Enforcement undertakings (EUs) used to address breaches of environmental legislation

Walsh Mushrooms Group of Vale Park, Evesham, is now working within the rules and has made a payment of £54,880.33 to the Marine Conservation Society to make amends for the failures.

The company, whose head office is in Gorey, Co Wexford in the Republic of Ireland, admitted they had not registered under packaging regulations between 2007-2017 and had failed to implement proper recycling practices.

Officers from the Environment Agency estimated that the company handled nearly 9,000 tonnes of packaging in that period.

The legislation is designed to ensure companies take a responsible approach to packaging materials.

Beth Haste, a regulatory officer for the Environment Agency, said:

Enforcement Undertakings are an effective enforcement tool used by the Environment Agency to enable businesses to address breaches of environmental legislation and contribute to environmental projects.

We are increasingly using this method of enforcement for suitable cases to bring businesses into compliance with environmental legislation and requirements, and to protect the environment. However, we will prosecute or impose monetary penalties in appropriate cases.

Please report any environmental issues to the Environment Agency's 24 hour incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

Jenny Griffiths, Education Manager for the Marine Conservation Society, said:

The enforcement undertaking from Walsh Mushrooms is being used to research, design and create new education materials to inspire action and ocean friendly behaviours from consumers and businesses throughout England.

## **Notes to editor**

### **What is an enforcement undertaking?**

An EU is available to the Environment Agency as an alternative sanction to prosecution or monetary penalty for dealing with certain environmental offences. It is a legally-binding voluntary agreement proposed by a business (or an individual) when the Environment Agency has reasonable grounds to suspect that an environmental offence has occurred.

EUs for environmental offences were introduced under the Environmental Civil Sanctions (England) Order 2010 and the Environmental Civil Sanctions (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2010.

### **Why use enforcement undertakings?**

- businesses will voluntarily secure compliance now and in the future, without attracting a criminal record
- the environment, local community and those directly impacted by the offending can benefit through actions being offered in an EU
- they allow us to deal with the less intentional and polluting offending in a more proportionate way than prosecution through the criminal courts
- EUs go beyond the bare minimum needed for a business to comply, as shown in the list of accepted EUs we publish on GOV.UK

## **How can businesses benefit from enforcement undertakings instead of prosecution?**

Accepting an EU is always at the discretion of the Environment Agency but if accepted replaces the need for an alternative sanction, such as prosecution or monetary penalty.

The Environment Agency has produced guidance and standard forms to help those wishing to make offers. However, we expect responsible businesses to co-operate with the Environment Agency and seek our advice at an early stage, as we are more likely to accept EUs which have been offered early or proactively.

When offering an EU, businesses must accept responsibility for the offending and include actions which will stop offending, ensure future compliance, protect any harm/damage as well as making a financial contribution towards a suitable environmental project which helps protect, improve or protect the natural capital of England.

### **The regulation/s the company did not meet**

Between 2007-2017: Regulation 40 (1) a failure to register under the Producer of Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2007.

Between 2007-2017: Regulation 40 (1) b failure to recover/recycle the Producer of Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 2007.

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## **New high-tech 5G lab to boost network security and resilience**

- Lab will allow Britain's brightest innovators to test technology in a 'simulated' real-world environment
- Central pillar in government strategy to build a more secure and innovative 5G supply chain

A new high-tech lab to speed up the development of 5G communication kit and help Britain diversify its supply chains will be launched today.

The government-backed £1 million SONIC Labs will help accelerate the adoption of 'Open RAN' technology which is a major pillar of the government's 5G Diversification Strategy.

The strategy aims to build a more secure and innovative supply chain which is fit for the future, less reliant on a small number of multinational suppliers and more accessible for new market entrants.

The lab will be a real-world testing facility that aims to bring in multiple



providers to supply components for 5G radio equipment.

Open RAN technology will end situations where only one supplier's technology can be used for a telecoms network to function. For example, it will allow components from different telecoms suppliers to be exchanged or used as replacements at masts that, until now, have been kitted out by a single supplier.

Based in London and Brighton, SONIC Labs will enable telecoms equipment manufacturers to examine how their kit behaves in a fully interoperable, technology-neutral mobile network. It also aims to encourage innovative vendors to enter the UK telecoms supply chain and drive innovation in public networks.

Digital Infrastructure Minister Matt Warman will launch the centre at a virtual event this morning. He said:

I'm thrilled that SONIC Labs is opening its doors to the wealth of telecoms expertise we have in this country to explore new ways of building 5G networks.

Our investment is a crucial element of our strategy to tackle the world's over-reliance on a small number of telecoms vendors by growing our own cutting-edge solutions at home.

I look forward to seeing how the lab will help deliver the incredible social and economic benefits of new technology for people around the UK.

The lab is being run by Ofcom and Digital Catapult, who have built the facility using existing Digital Catapult infrastructure and capability, £1 million of seed funding from DCMS, and a bespoke SONIC Labs branch as part of Ofcom's Innovation Lab in Riverside House.

SONIC Labs will work with a diverse range of vendors to explore new open approaches to telecoms networks, including Accelleran, Mavenir, Radisys, Benetel, Phluido, Druid and Effnet.

Digital Catapult Chief Technology Officer Joe Butler said:

In SONIC Labs we are experimenting to make interoperability a reality. This effort supports our mission to drive UK capability in advanced digital technology and we are grateful to Ofcom for working with us in this partnership and to DCMS for the opportunity to leverage the 5G testbeds we have developed in this effort.

Ofcom Chief Executive Dame Melanie Dawes said:

SONIC Labs is an exciting project that gives us the opportunity to

explore how new telecoms technology could operate in the UK market. It's all about bringing innovation to our communications networks – helping to support fast, secure and reliable connections for the future. A number of companies are already getting involved and we look forward to more joining too.

In his speech at the SONIC Labs launch, Mr Warman also announced that DCMS is developing a long-term strategy for 5G and future wireless networks in the UK.

As part of this, the government will be considering the role of spectrum, the finite radio wave resource central to developing these technologies, and set out how the government will continue to ensure that wireless infrastructure plays an integral role in enabling the UK's economy and society to build back better.

The government will be working closely with industry, Ofcom, academia and others to help shape its thinking and develop the evidence base. More detail on how we will develop this work will be announced later this year. Find out more about [SONIC Labs](#)

**ENDS**

For more information contact the DCMS press office: 020 7211 2210